

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 5650

C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 2787

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PBOR MO SP SS IR

SUBJECT: SPANISH SAHARA: IRANIAN AMBASSADOR'S INTEREST IN
POSSIBLE MEDIATION BY SHAH

FOR AMBASSADOR HELMS FROM AMBASSADOR NEUMANN

1. IRAN'S AMBASSADOR TO MOROCCO, ABBAS NAYERI, HAS INFORMED ME HE SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE TEHRAN JUNE 14 FOR CONSULTATIONS. HE HAS ALSO INDICATED AN INTEREST IN CONTACTING YOU IN CONNECTION WITH AN IDEA HE HAS RAISED WITH ME CONCERNING POSSIBLE MEDIATION BY SHAH IN SAHARA DISPUTE.

2. NAYERI, WHO IS A GOOD PERSONAL FRIEND AND VALUABLE SOURCE, CALLED ON ME LATE LAST WEEK TO SPECULATE ABOUT DESIRABILITY OF MEDIATION BY SHAH. AT MOMENT, HE THOUGHT, ALTHOUGH SITUATION IN SAHARA QUITE TENSE, THERE SEEMED TO BE SOME PROSPECT FOR NEGOTIATIONS GETTING UNDERWAY. NAYERI POINTED OUT THAT IRAN MIGHT BE IN A GOOD POSITION TO MEDIATE OVER SAHARA, PARTICULARLY VIS-A-VIS ALGERIANS BECAUSE OF ALGERIA'S RECENT HELP IN SETTLING IRAN'S DIFFERENCES WITH IRAQ. NAYERI ALSO BELIEVED SHAH MIGHT PREFER TO BE INVITED TO MEDIATE, RATHER THAN TO TAKE INITIATIVE HIMSELF, AND SPECULATED THAT U.S. MIGHT BE POSSIBLE CANDIDATE FOR EXTENDING INVITATION.

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3. I GAVE HIM A GENERALLY NEUTRAL REACTION AND, ON HIS POINT

ABOUT U.S. EXTENDING INVITATION, TRIED TO DISCOURAGE HIM,
POINTING OUT THAT CERTAIN ARAB COUNTRIES WOULD BE IN MUCH
BETTER POSITION TO TAKE SUCH AN INITIATIVE.

4. AS FOREGOING INDICATES, NAYERI'S INITIATIVE ON POSSIBLE
SAHARA MEDIATION EFFORT BY SHAH DOES NOT APPEAR TO HAVE FULLY
CRYSTALIZED AS YET. NOTHING DAUNTED, HOWEVER, HE ASKED ME
LAST WEEK, AND AGAIN ON TELEPHONE BEFORE LEAVING, TO CONTACT
YOU SO THAT HE MIGHT CALL ON YOU TO DISCUSS MATTER.

5. IN LIGHT OF NAYERI'S HELPFULNESS HERE AND HIS FRIENDLY
ATTITUDE TOWARD U.S., IT WOULD BE A NICE GESTURE IF YOU COULD
RECEIVE HIM AND HEAR HIM OUT. HE MAY WELL NOT BECOME MORE
SPECIFIC WITH YOU THAN HE HAS SO FAR BEEN WITH ME. OUR OWN
FEELING HERE ON QUESTION OF SHAH'S MEDIATING IN SAHARA IS THAT
THERE SEEMS TO BE REASONABLE DEGREE OF DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY AT
MOMENT AND THAT IT WOULD PERHAPS BE BEST TO WAIT TO SEE HOW
SITUATION DEVELOPS. AS TO QUESTION OF U.S. INVITATION TO SHAH
TO INTERVENE, WE WOULD JUDGE THERE NO USEFUL ROLE IN THIS FOR
U.S. AT MOMENT, GIVEN INDICATIONS THAT PARTIES CONCERNED ARE
ACTIVE ON DIPLOMATIC FRONT AND LIKELIHOOD THAT OTHERS WOULD
IN ANY CASE BE MORE APPROPRIATE INSTIGATORS OF MEDIATION
BY SHAH THAN WE.

6. WARM REGARDS.
NEUMANN

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